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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/720,277	11/25/2003	Yukihiko Shimonoma	024656-00030	4788

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EXAMINER

JEFFERY, JOHN A

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3742

DATE MAILED: 01/10/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/720,277	Applicant(s) SHIMONOMA ET AL.	
	Examiner John A. Jeffery	Art Unit 3742	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-6 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3, 5 and 6 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 4 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 25 November 2003 is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☒ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____. |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____. | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: ____. |

DETAILED ACTION

Title of Invention

The title of the invention is not descriptive. A new title is required that is clearly indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed.

The following title is suggested: "Air Heater With Expansion Containing Electric Heater."

Drawing Objections

The drawings are objected to because of the following informalities:

Fig. 2: The figure must be labeled "PRIOR ART."

Corrected drawing sheets in compliance with 37 CFR 1.121(d) are required in reply to the Office action to avoid abandonment of the application. Any amended replacement drawing sheet should include all of the figures appearing on the immediate prior version of the sheet, even if only one figure is being amended. The figure or figure number of an amended drawing should not be labeled as "amended." If a drawing figure is to be canceled, the appropriate figure must be removed from the replacement sheet, and where necessary, the remaining figures must be renumbered and appropriate changes made to the brief description of the several views of the drawings for consistency. Additional replacement sheets may be necessary to show the renumbering of the remaining figures. The replacement sheet(s) should be labeled "Replacement Sheet" in the page header (as per 37 CFR 1.84(c)) so as not to obstruct any portion of

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the drawing figures. If the changes are not accepted by the examiner, the applicant will be notified and informed of any required corrective action in the next Office action. The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance.

Claim Objections

Claims 4-6 are objected to because of the following informalities:

Claim 4: In line 2, "obtained by bending itself somewhere along it" must be deleted for brevity because the phrase is superfluous. Such a process is implied by the term "bent portion." In line 5, "it" must be changed to the noun to which "it" refers for clarity (i.e., "it" must be changed to "electric heater").

Claim 5: In line 2, "of" must be changed to "containing."

Claim 6: The comma must be deleted in line 2.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claim 3 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as failing to set forth the subject matter which applicant(s) regard as their invention. The test for definiteness under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph is whether "those skilled in the art would understand what is claimed when the claim is read in light of the

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specification.” *Orthokinetics, Inc. v. Safety Travel Chairs, Inc.*, 806 F.2d 1565, 1576, 1 USPQ2d 1081, 1088 (Fed. Cir. 1986).

Because no antecedent basis exists for “the exit,” it is unclear what is meant by the term—even when read in light of the specification. Moreover, the scope of the claim is unclear. For examination purposes, the examiner presumes that the terms “exit” and “outlet” as used in the claim are synonymous.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless -

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1, 2, and 5 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Wright et al (US 2,597,215). Wright et al (US 2,597,215) discloses an air heater comprising an air blowing passage with “expansion” 20 containing electric heater 50. The tapered portion 28 enables the air trunk area to decrease smoothly on the downstream side of the expansion. See Fig. 1. As shown in Fig. 8, fan 84 produces airflow therethrough.

Regarding claim 5, note thermal insulation 22 disposed around the expansion in Fig. 1.

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Claims 1 and 3 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Stuart (US 2,790,064). Stuart (US 2,790,064) discloses an air heater comprising an air blowing passage with an "expansion" containing electric heater 31. The cross-sectional area of the expansion's outlet exceeds that of its inlet. See Fig. 3.

Claims 1 and 6 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Norstrom et al (US 1,232,598). Norstrom et al (US 1,232,598) discloses an air heater comprising an outer wall 14 that surrounds an air-blowing passage 17. The passage comprises an "expansion" 17' containing electric heaters 19'. See Fig. 2. Such a structure enables the inlet air in the surrounding duct 14 to be preheated prior to its introduction to the fan. See P. 2, lines 11-17.

Joint Inventors -- Common Ownership Presumed

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103, the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligations under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of potential 35 U.S.C. 102(f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Subject matter developed by another person, which qualifies as prior art only under subsection (f) and (g) of section 102 of this title, shall not preclude patentability under this section where the subject matter and the claimed invention were, at the time the invention was made, owned by the same person or subject to an obligation of assignment to the same person.

Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wright et al (US 2,597,215) in view of Norstrom et al (US 1,232,598). The claim differs from the previously cited prior art in calling for an airspace within a double structure. Such structures in electric air heaters, however, are well known in the art. Norstrom et al (US 1,232,598), for example, discloses providing an outer wall 14 that surrounds an air-blowing passage 17. The passage comprises an "expansion" 17' containing electric heaters 19'. See Fig. 2. Such a structure enables the inlet air in the surrounding duct 14 to be preheated prior to its introduction to the fan. See P. 2, lines 11-17. In view of Norstrom et al (US 1,232,598), it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art to provide a double structure with airspace therebetween in the previously described apparatus to preheat the inlet air in the surrounding duct 14 prior to its introduction to the fan, thus improving convection heating efficiency.

Double Patenting

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

Claim 1 is provisionally rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claim 1 of copending Application No. 10/720,274. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the claim of the instant application is merely broader in scope than the '274 application claim. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993).

Allowable Subject Matter

Claim 4 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Other Pertinent Prior Art

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Applicant should (1) separately consider the art, and (2) consider the art together with the previously cited prior art for potential applicability under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 or 103 when responding to this action. US 796, US 342, US 180, US 292, US 441, US 497, US 297 disclose air heaters with element-containing expansions in the flow path relevant to the instant invention.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to John A. Jeffery whose telephone number is (571) 272-4781. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Thursday from 7:00 AM to 4:30 PM. The examiner can also be reached on alternate Fridays.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Robin Evans, can be reached on (571) 272-4777. All faxes should be sent to the centralized fax number at (703) 872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John A. Jeffery". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

**JOHN A. JEFFERY
PRIMARY EXAMINER**

1/5/05